CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for improving a user's balance having a selectively controllable degree of stability and configured for positioning on a surface, the apparatus comprising:

a platform having a top engagement surface and a bottom surface; and

a hemispherical fulcrum bifurcated along a radial plane generally orthogonal to the platform into separate pivot members each having a contact face and being slidably mounted with the bottom surface of the platform, the pivot members being movable between a first position wherein the pivot members abut one another to form the contact faces thereof into a unified dome like shape for resting on the surface, and a second position wherein the pivot members are spaced from one another to present two separate half-dome like shaped contact faces for resting on the surface such that the second position offers increased stability for the platform in one direction over the first position.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a linear track extending laterally across the bottom surface of the platform, the pivot members being slidably mounted to the linear track for movement along the track to the second position to offer increased stability for the platform in a direction aligned with a longitudinal axis of the linear track.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the linear track comprises a pair of rails, and wherein each pivot member comprises a lower body region whereon the contact face is formed and having a top planar surface with a perimeter edge defined by a first arcuate section and a second linear section, and a upper mounting region disposed on the top planar surface inwardly from the first arcuate section of the perimeter edge, the upper body region having a pair of slots configured to slidably receive the pair of rails therein.

4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein a cavity is formed in the bottom surface of the platform with a major dimension extending parallel to the pair of rails such that the rails and upper mounting region of the pivot members are substantially disposed within the cavity.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a lock mounted with each pivot member to secure a selected position of the respective pivot member on the bottom surface of the platform.

6. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the lock comprises:

a pin having a threaded section and a handle, and extending through the pivot member; and

a spring mounted around the pin between the pivot member and the pin handle to bias the pin away from the platform bottom surface;

and wherein the platform bottom surface has a series of threaded bores to threadingly receive the pin threaded section to secure the pin to the bore and the pivot member at the selected position.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a stop to limit the range of movement of the pivot members along the platform bottom surface and to set the location of the pivot members first position.

8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the platform has a pair of arcuate side edges bridged on ends thereof by a pair of opposed ends regions recessed inwardly towards a center of the platform.

9. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein a pair of outer depressions are formed in the bottom surface of the platform proximal to the end regions to form the end regions into a set of handles.

10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the pivot members each have a cavity formed in the half-dome like shaped contact face to form a recessed handle that may be grasped to slide the pivot member along the bottom surface of the platform.

11. A balancing device, comprising:

a platform having an engagement surface whereon a user may be positioned and an underside;

at least two pivot members, each having a rounded contact face for resting on a surface; and

means for slidably mounting the pivot members with the underside of the platform such that the pivot members may be moved laterally to a first position proximal to one another and a second position distal to one another, the second position offering increased stability for the platform in one direction over the first position.

12. The device of claim 11, wherein the means for slidably mounting the pivot members with the underside of the platform further allows the movement of the pivot members to a third position offering increased stability for the platform in one direction over the first position but less stability than the second position.

13. The device of claim 11, wherein each pivot member further has an abutting surface such that the pivot members may be slid together in contact with one another to form a hemispherical fulcrum.

14. The device of claim 11, wherein the pivot members comprise a lower body region whereon the contact face is formed and an upper mounting region, the means for slidably mounting the pivot members comprising:

a linear track extending laterally across the underside of the platform; and

a set of slots formed in the upper mounting region of each pivot member for accepting the linear track therein;

wherein the second position offers increased stability for the platform in a direction aligned with a longitudinal axis of the linear track.

15. The device of claim 14, wherein a cavity is formed in the underside of the platform with a major dimension extending parallel to the linear track such that the track and upper mounting region of the pivot members are substantially disposed within the cavity.

16. The device of claim 11, further comprising a lock mounted with each pivot member to secure the selected position of the respective pivot member on the underside of the platform.

17. The device of claim 11, wherein the platform has a pair of arcuate side edges bridged on ends thereof by a pair of ends regions recessed inwardly towards a center of the platform.

18. The device of claim 17, wherein a pair of outer depressions are formed in the underside of the platform proximal to the end regions to form the end regions into a set of handles.

19. The device of claim 11, wherein the pivot members each have a cavity formed in the half-dome like shaped contact face to form a recessed handle that may be grasped to slide the pivot member along the bottom surface of the platform.

20. A balancing device, comprising:

a platform having an engagement surface whereon a user may be positioned and an underside;

at least two pivot members, each having a rounded contact face for resting on a surface; and

means for mounting the pivot members with the underside of the platform such that the pivot members may be moved at least to a first position proximal to one another and a second position distal to one another, the second position offering increased stability for the platform in one direction over the first position.

21. In a balancing device of the type having a platform and at least one pivot member mounted to the platform, the improvement comprising:

a pair of recessed platform end regions extending towards a center of the platform at opposed ends thereof to form a pair of handles.

22. The device of claim 21, wherein the improvement further comprises:

a pair of outer cavities formed in the bottom surface of the platform proximal to the end regions.